

CASE REPORTS

used to search for a ruptured viscus.^{1,2,8} Abdominal paracentesis has also been used to exclude peritonitis.^{2,4,8}

Summary

A case is presented of pneumoperitoneum secondary to the use of an intermittent positive pressure breathing machine. Although uncommon, this potential source of pneumoperitoneum should be considered and, if indicated, additional diagnostic studies employed in order to avoid laparotomy to search for a ruptured viscus.

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Handling a Parent with Asthma

How can negative psychological effects of an asthmatic parent on a child with asthma be reduced?

The first thing I think I would do is say to the parent, "You know, it's just going to be very difficult for you to follow my advice, because you've got another set of advice in your head from when you were little, and I really would like to help you separate those things out." So you are as clear as possible about the fact that there's a problem. You've not judgmental about it; you're just describing that this is going to be difficult for them. Then you say, "OK, it would help me to learn as much about you and *your* asthma as possible." And then get them to tell you everything terrible they can think of about their own asthma and about their relationships with their parents, so that you've got a backlog of information to work with. Then, when you're advising the parent—let's say, for example, it is a mother who doesn't want to let her boy go out and play because every time he goes out and plays he comes back wheezing a little bit—you can say to her, "How was it with you when you were little?" And then say, "... it's really OK for him to go out and play . . . he has to learn his own limits. If you set limits, you're depriving him of learning" You simply try to get as specific as possible about your advice and the child's needs, and accept the parents' problems and help him or her to work with them. Most parents really appreciate that . . . they really don't mind that kind of constructive hassling.

—WILLIAM M. BOLMAN, MD, *Honolulu, Hawaii*
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